

Seven deadly sins to avoid in job interviews | The New Daily

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Presenting yourself as competent and well-informed is vital for success in job interviews. Here are seven mistakes that threaten failure.



Seven rules for job interviews *Photo: Getty*

With unemployment stuck at 5.8 per cent, economic growth well below trend and wages growth slow, finding the job that will reward you personally and financially is getting harder all the time.

In this environment, making a good impression at job interviews is vital for your success so avoid sabotaging yourself with these silly mistakes.

1. Arriving unprepared

Richard Triggs, managing partner at Arete Executive search firm, says he is constantly surprised at the number of candidates who do no research before an interview.

“They arrive completely underprepared,” he says. “There really is no excuse, with the amount of information available online about both the company and the person interviewing. Most people have LinkedIn profiles today.

“Often the interviewer will ask, ‘do you have any questions for us’ and a candidate will say, ‘oh not really,’” Mr Triggs says.

“This is a perfect opportunity for the candidate to say, ‘I was reading your company website’ or ‘I’ve looked at your LinkedIn profile’ and start a conversation. It’s an easy and important way to demonstrate to the prospective employer that you’re interested.”

2. Being underdressed



Dress well. Photo: Getty

Mr Triggs’ advice is when in doubt always dress up.

“You can always take a suit jacket off if the interview is casual, but it’s a lot harder to dress up when the interviewer is formally dressed when you arrive.”

Online appearances are just as critical.

“Make sure your social media profile is professional. An employer will take the time to search your online profiles.”

People do lots of inappropriate things on their Facebook page so be careful not to present yourself in a way you wouldn’t want a potential employer to see, he says.

3. Being disparaging or airing dirty laundry

Talent Web managing director Dave McKillop recommends never saying anything negative about a current or past employer.

“Instead, tell an interviewer that it’s time to make a change or that you’re leaving to advance your career,” says Mr McKillop. “Focus on the value you have added and how you plan to utilise that experience to assist the growth and development of your next employer.”

“It’s okay to be ambitious; however, it is not okay to speak about an ex-employer in derogatory terms without some very clear context.”

4. Not addressing everyone in the room

“If there is more than one interviewer in the room, it’s important to give them all your attention. Don’t just focus on one manager,” says Mr Trigg. “Importantly,” he adds, “don’t forget to smile and make eye contact.”

5. Lying on your resume

“This is a no-brainer,” says Mr Triggs. “It’s hard to believe, but it happens all the time and people get caught out.

“Recently we had a situation where we contacted a past employer cited by a job applicant who told us that the individual in question had never worked there.



Make eye contact. *Photo: Getty*

“Never be dishonest. Employers are now hiring professional validation agencies to do checks on CVs. Your CV and LinkedIn profile should marry up,” Mr Triggs says.

6. Saying how much money you want

Mr Triggs recommends interviewees tread cautiously when it comes to saying how much they want to be paid.

“When an employer asks you what salary you’re looking for, never give an amount. Instead ask what they are looking to pay,” he says.

Successfully negotiating a salary means being smart. If you put your cards on the table first, you lose.

“For example, an employer may ask a candidate how much they want. If the candidate replies \$100,000 then the employer might offer \$70,000 and a compromise is made around \$85,000.

“On the other hand, if the candidate’s response to the question is, ‘what are you offering’ the employer may say \$70,000. The candidate then asks for \$130,000 and a compromise will be reached around \$100,000,” Mr Triggs says.

7. Telling a recruiter about other interviews

Mr Triggs’ final piece of advice is to not give too much away to a recruiter regarding other jobs you are interviewing for.

“It’s sad but true that in some cases, an unethical recruiter will contact those recruiters and then try to get the details of their candidates and invite them for an interview for the job you are after,” Mr Triggs says.



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